

Appl No. 10/725,879
Amd. Dated September 19, 2005
Reply to Office Action of August 29, 2005

REMARKS:

The Office Action dated August 29, 2005 has been received and claims 1, 12 and 14 have been amended to include the status identifier "currently." The remainder of this amendment reproduces the amendment that was submitted on August 15, 2005.

The Office Action dated April 7, 2005 has been received and carefully reviewed. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the remarks below.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 15-23 are allowed and that Claim 12 would be allowable if rewritten to in independent format to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 12 has been amended to independent form, including all the elements of Claim 1 from which Claim 12 originally depended. There are no intervening claims between Claim 1 and Claim 12. As amended, Claim 12 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

An amendment is requested in the specification to state that the spider joint includes a plurality of angularly oriented receivers, such as five receivers. This amendment is believed to be supported by the language of Claims 1 and 14 as originally filed, such that no new matter is added by the requested amendment.

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 14, 15, 23 and newly amended claim 12 in independent format. Claims 1, 12 and 14 have been amended.

Independent Claim 1, as amended, calls for a vehicle frame and body straightening jig comprising: an elongated longitudinal spine member; a plurality of

support legs extending from the spine member; a frame connection device positioned on at least one of the legs; and a spider joint positioned at an end of the spine member, the spider joint including a plurality of receivers, each receiver adapted to enable selective connection of a pulling assembly to the receiver, the receivers being fixed in a selected radiating relation.

Independent Claim 14, as amended, calls for a vehicle straightening jig comprising substantially the same spine member, support legs, and frame connection device as called for in Claim 1 and adds to them a joint positioned on the spine member and including a plurality of receivers to enable selective reception of at least two pulling assemblies on one side of the vehicle, each receiver being adapted to enable connection of a pulling assembly thereto.

Claims 1 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Weschler '186 in view of Stultz '659. Fig. 6 of Weschler shows a frame straightening jig including a plurality of angularly arrayed sockets 225 to receive a side arm 230 having a frame clamp 80 and a surface engaging foot similar to the foot 32. There is no disclosure or suggestion in Weschler that the sockets 225 or similar sockets be used to receive a pulling device 90 in the manner called for in Claims 1 and 14.

Stultz discloses a railroad boxcar end wall straightening apparatus including a pair of arms 61 and a pulling bar 39 which connect to a jacking head 42. A vertically operating jack 47 engages the head 42 to urge it upwardly, thereby pushing shoes 71 positioned on the rear ends of the arms 61 against the end wall of the boxcar to push the wall back

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toward the car after having previously been pushed out by cargo within the car. There is no disclosure or suggestion in Stultz that the arms 61 are used as "pulling assembl[ies]", as specifically called for in Claims 1 and 14.

The "receivers" 84 referred to by the Examiner are termed "sockets" by Stultz. Fig. 18 shows the sockets 84 to be hemispherical and apparently functioning as abutments to transfer upward force of the jack to diagonal pushing force along the arms 61a. It appears that if the arms 61a were pulling devices, as asserted by the Examiner, the arms 61a would pull away from the sockets 84. Thus, the sockets 84 and head 42a teach away from the type of arrangement called for in amended Claims 1 and 14, which include "a plurality of receivers" for "pulling" devices. Applicant urges that Weschler and Stultz do not suggest any practical combination of their disclosures to arrive at the arrangement called for in Claims 1 or 14. For these reasons, applicant urges that Claims 1 and 14 should be allowable over any combination of Weschler, Stultz, and any of the other cited references.

Claims 2-11 and 13 depend from Claim 1, add further details thereto, and are believed to distinguish over the cited references, including Celette '802 and Widegren et al. '405, for the same reasons as Claim 1.

Claims 1-14 are presented for reconsideration. Applicant contends that said claims define vehicle frame and body straightening jigs which are not anticipated by or obvious from any of the references of record, either singly or in combination. Therefore, allowance of Claims 1-14, along with Claims 15-23, is earnestly solicited.

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The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below in the event it is felt the prosecution of this application can be expedited thereby.

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Respectfully submitted,

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